

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I want to yield 2 minutes to a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, Congresswoman BLACKBURN of Tennessee.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding the time.

You know, this has been such an interesting discussion that we have carried forth on this bill. It has lasted for weeks. And finally the majority decides they're going to do something about it. But you know, it really is a bait-and-switch-type issue with the American people because the American people are for drilling on American soil for American energy resources because they want to move to energy independence. They want to lower the price at the pump. And the bill that we have in front of us is not going to do that.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, if you get into section 101 of this bill, what is it that you find right out of the gate, right from the start, what is it that the majority wants to do? And now bear in mind this bill never came to the Energy and Commerce Committee. It didn't go to the Energy Subcommittee. The 290 pages of this bill was dropped in the dark of night last night and brought to the floor today.

But in section 101 of the bill, what do you have? Putting permanently off-limits some of the richest reserve areas in the Outer Continental Shelf.

So it's like that situation where you want to give a little and take a lot, which is not appropriate when we have the price of gas in our States at all-time record highs today.

Other things that it does not do is to address renewables without tax hikes. If you want renewables, run the taxes up, is what the majority says, what the Democrats say. Oil shale exploration? Not going to do that. Arctic coastal plain, ANWR? Not going to do that.

If you want nuclear—in TVA and Tennessee, we're looking at a 20 percent electric rate hike. But this bill would make it more difficult for expanding nuclear. There's nothing in there for emission-free nuclear. And we know that our rates are going up 20 percent. We know that moving from hydroelectric to nuclear is an imperative for us.

I encourage my colleagues to vote this bill down and vote for the American Energy Act, all-of-the-above.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the distinguished chairman of our Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources, an individual who's helped us a great deal in the drafting of this legislation, the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA).

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman RAHALL, Chairman MILLER, and Chairman GREEN for all their hard work and their continuous efforts to try to ensure that we deal with America's energy crisis today.

I rise in support of the passage of H.R. 6899, but I view this bill as a work in progress. Obviously it's not in its

final form. The Senate needs to vet its efforts, and the President needs to weigh in, and therefore it needs more work, in my opinion.

I do appreciate, though, the Speaker's efforts on this bill. And I do hope to continue to support her efforts as we look at the compromise, the bipartisan compromise, that will continue to improve this measure.

In its current form, however, it doesn't provide some of the comprehensive efforts and solutions that existed in the measure that Congressmen ABERCROMBIE, PETERSON, and others worked on in a bipartisan effort; and I want to thank them, Representatives ABERCROMBIE and PETERSON, for their hard work. Six weeks we worked in June and in July to form the bipartisan compromise effort otherwise known as the National Conservation Environment and Energy Independence Act, H.R. 6709.

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The differences between that effort and this are the following:

First, the bill prohibits drilling within 50 miles of the coast, which, in my opinion, puts a lot of our most promising areas off-limits in terms of the Outer Continental Shelf.

Second, by not allowing revenue sharing with States, as we do with Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi, I think it makes it less likely that States will opt in to leasing, even between the 50 and 100 miles.

Third, the bill doesn't directly tie the new royalties generated to funding for renewables and energy efficiency. So it doesn't provide the same benefits that we have in H.R. 6709, although there are some PAYGO issues there. I think they are workable. I think we can get this measure out. I think we can work with them in the Senate.

The bottom line is that we need to use all the energy tools in our energy toolbox. That includes both coal sequestration, as well as new advances in nuclear power that doesn't put it in Nevada.

We talk a lot about the urge to put an Apollo-like program together. We do. We do need to do that in a bipartisan effort. But sometimes people forget that in the Apollo program, we had the Mercury program so that men could go into space. We had the Gemini project that showed that you could dock and you could spacewalk before we got to Apollo.

The goal is to reduce our dependency on fossil fuels, reduce our dependency on foreign sources of energy. We can't get there overnight. We need to have this Apollo-like program that uses our current energy resources here in America to finance the renewables that will bridge the gap. That's what we need to do.

It's my hope that the provisions of our previous measure can be incorporated into this bill as we work through the legislative process, as we should do. But I think it's a step in the

right direction, this measure. We need to move forward to take a closer look at how we come together in a bipartisan effort in that comprehensive energy package. The American public demands that we do this. Our economy requires that we do this.

We are going to have a transfer of \$750 million in wealth this year just to pay for our energy price tag. For all those reasons, I urge my colleagues to vote for this measure, even though you don't like some of the elements in this measure, as I don't believe some of the elements in this measure are pointed toward that comprehensive effort.

But I want to commend my colleagues, Chairman RAHALL, Chairman MILLER and Chairman GREEN, for their willingness to compromise. I want to continue my efforts across the aisle with Congressman PETERSON and others who are part of that bipartisan effort. That's what we need to do, that's what the American public expects, and that's why I'm voting for this measure.

I thank the chairman.

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS).

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I come before you today to address the majority's so-called energy package. I find the name odd, considering it contains almost no energy provisions. Instead, it serves as political cover, an empty offering to the American people before the November elections. After all, it contains no language to build new nuclear power plants or oil refineries. And while it claims to allow offshore drilling, it actually keeps 88 percent of offshore oil reserves under lock and key.

The American people want real action and meaningful solutions that include an increase in American-produced energy. The American Energy Act, on the other hand, will open all of our vast natural resources, allowing oil exploration offshore and in ANWR. It assists in the building of new oil refineries and nuclear power plants, and extends the tax credits to encourage more investment and research into wind and solar energy.

This is the all-of-the-above energy solution that the American people have been asking for. I implore my colleagues to listen to the American people. Bring the real energy bill to the floor for a vote.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I am very honored to yield 1 minute to the distinguished dean of the House and cosponsor of the pending legislation and chairman of our Energy and Commerce Committee, Mr. DINGELL of Michigan.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the legislation. I rise to commend and express my great respect for the distinguished gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL), chairman of the Committee on Natural Resources, and also to my colleague Mr. GREEN, a valuable member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

They, working with the Speaker, have come forward with a good bill,